

A SERMON OF REPENTANCE.

*A very godly and profitable Sermon
+ preached at Lee in Essex by Arthur
Dent, Minister of Gods word: and
published at the request of sundry
godly and well disposed persons.*

*7 March
1581*

IONAH. 2.8.

*They that waite upon lying vanities, forsake
their owne mercie.*



At London Printed for John Harrison, and are
to be sold at the signe of the Greyhound in
Pater noster rowe. 1598.
their request

A Sermon preached
is prepared for you from the beginning of
the worlde. The which tyme, the Lorde
bring hastily vpon vs, euen so; his sonnes
sake, Iesus Christ our Sauour: to whom
with the holy Ghost, three persons and
one God, be all honoꝝ and glo-
rie, both nowe and
euer. Amen.

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In Concionem Arthuri Dent
G. Pwddæi Carmen.

Maturè respisce, precor, peccataq, linque,
Qui legis aut audis, quisquis es, istud opus
Sin noua peccatis peccata prioribus addes,
Olim hac te contra concio testis erit :
Hac aliquot lecta flētes sua crimina multum,
Mutarunt mores, & noua vita placet.

The same in English.

THOU that doest read or heare this work
I wish thee to doe this :
Repent in time, and sinne forsake,
amend that is amisse.
But if thou wilt adde sinne to sinne,
not minding to amend,
This Sermon shall a witnesse be,
against thee in the ende,
Some that haue heard this read of late,
lamenting much their sinne :
Haue change their former manners,
and a new life now begin,



To the Reader.



Although I was
moste ynwil-
ling that this
poore talente
and travell of
mine should e-
uer haue been
broched abroad
and come to
light; both be-
cause it may seeme as a Candle lighted at
noone day; as also because many other
mens doings might more worthily a gret
deale haue beene published, and commit-
ted vnto letters: yet because diuers which
hearde it preached with a liuely voyce,
were very instant, yea and more than im-
portunate with me to haue it published,
vsing such reasons as I could not greatly
gain-say, I did at the last yeeld to their
request

To the Reader,

request, and so this vntimely fruit is come
abroad, to bee solde in open marketes.
Let no man therefore bee offended that I
haue not strayned my selfe to flie an high
pitch, to faine out the froth of mans
wisedome, and to make a great shew of
learning, by blowing the bladder of va-
nitie till it burst with swelling. For that is
not my use, I seeke especially the saluati-
on of the simple and ignorant, and there-
fore stoop downe to their reach and ca-
pacitye. Therefore I beseech thee gentle
Reader, accept my good meaning: Read
this without preiudice, like it as thou
profitest, so shalt thou haue
praise of God, and com-
fort in thy con-
science.





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The text, Luke 13. 5.

I tell you nay: but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.

THE occasion of these wordes of our Lorde and Sauour Iesus Christ was, because there were certain that shewed him of the *Galileans*, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their owne sacrifices: That is, murdered them as they were sacrificing: & so their blood was mingled with the blood of y^e beasts which were sacrificed. Those men therfore thought that those *Galileans* were greater sinners then all other *Galileans*, because they had suffered such things: and y^e those eighteen also, vpon whom the tower in *Siloam* fell & slue them, were sinners aboue all men that dwelt in *Ierusalem*. Wherein they did vtter a secret corruption, naturally ingendered in al men, that

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that is, very sharply, to see into the sinnes of others, and severely to censure them: but in the meane while to flatter themselves, and to be blindfolded in seeing their owne sinnes. For these men thought because the like iudgements did not fall vpon them, therefore they were safe enough, they were not so great sinners, but rather highly in the fauour of God, According as many doe falsly suppose, that those are alwayes the worst sort of people, whom God doth most strike, and presse with his punishing hand, hauing forgotten that God doth not keepe an ordinary rate here belowe, to punish euery man as hee is worst, or to fauour and cocker him as hee is best, but onely taketh some examples as hee thinketh good, for the instruction and aduertisement of al others, and to be as it were looking glasse, where in euery man may see his owne face, ven and his owne cause handled, and that God is a severe reuenger of sinne, that all men may learn by the example of some to tremble and beware, least peraduenture they be worthily constrainned to keepe their owne turnes, and to knowe what they haue deserved. These men which brought these newes to our Saviour Christ had taken
forth

of Repentance.

forth this lesson: whereupon our Saviour is iustly occasioned to correct their erroneous and sinister iudgement, and to teach them that they must not reioyce at the iust punishments of others, but rather to be instructed thereby to repentance.

And further to signifie, that GOD doth not alwayes most punish the most notorious offenders, as Murtherers, Thieves, Robbers, Whoremasters, Blasphemers, Quarrellers, Scoffers, and such like, but reserueth them vnto the iudgement of the great day, and as it were fatteth them against the day of slaughter, and therefore hee answereth them negatively, and sayth, Nay, or not so, but except ye repent, you shall all likewise perish: as if he should say, Are you all of this opinion indeed, that only monstrous sinners are punished in this world, and others let alone: or that the Galileans and those eightene vpon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, were greater sinners then all others: Or do you thinke because the same iudgements haue not light vpon you, therefore you shall steale away in the darke, and escape the iudgement of God: No no, you are deceiued. For I say vnto you, that except you mourne and lament

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ment for your finnes, and fall to some agreement with God in time, (you I say, euen you which are so ready to condemn others, and iustifie your selues) shall not onely perish with the like iudgements in this present world, but bee eueralstingly condemned in the world to come. So that our Saviour in so saying, both thunder downe a most dreadful sentence vpon all our heads; for he concludeth and setteth it downe, that all men liuing vpon the face of the earth; whether they be high or low, rich or poore; young or olde, noble or vnnoble, learned or vnlearned, simple or politique, of what estate, degree, and condition soeuer they bee, liuing and dying without repentance, shall perish and be damned in hell fire for euer. The Scriptures are full of such thunderbolts. Iohn 3. 18. He that beleeueth not is damned already. And 2. Corin. 13. ver. 5. Prooue your selues whether you are in the faith, examine your selues, knowe ye or not your selues that Iesus Christ is in you except ye bee reprobates? Where the Apostle flatly setteth downe that all those which haue not Christ dwelling in their heartes by faith, which is the household letter of repentance, are no better than reprobates.

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probates, castaways, and condemned persons. But because the most people in these dayes are grossly deceived in Repentance, both concerning what it is, what it meaneth, what it worketh, what bee the qualities and conditions of it, which bee the causes, and which bee the lettes and hinderances, and also why, when, and wherefore we should repent. Therefore I haue in present intent to teach first what is repentance. Secondly, which bee his qualities and effects. Thirdly, when wee should repent. Fourthly, wherefore we should repent. And last of al, what letteth vs from repentance: which order and methode of teaching, although some may mislike (as indeede with mee it is not ordinary) yet considering the matter I haue in hande, I thinke it not inconuenient. But to the matter. Repentance is an inwarde sorrowing, and continuall mourning of the hearte and conscience for sinne, ioynd with faith, and both inward and outwarde amendment. Inwarde, I say, in changing the thoughtes and affections of the hearte: and outwarde, in changing the wordes, and workes, from euill to good. This repentance no doubt was in Dauid, who when hee was couertly re-
proued

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proued by the Prophete Nathan, and his
sinnes layde before his eyes did not stub-
bornly defende them, and so iustle against
GOD: nor yet secretly excuse them, and
daube them ouer, but cryed out in the bit-
ternesse of his hearte, I haue sinned, and
thereupon made the 51. Psalm, a Psalm
indeede full of dolour and heavinesse. Wher-
in the Prophet bewayleth his fals, lamen-
teth his sinnes, and praieeth euen for a new
heart and a newe spirite, newe thoughtes,
newe affections, newe purposes of amend-
ment of life. So that in Dauid we may see
an inward sorrowing, a lasting griefe, (as
the booke of Psalmes doth euery where de-
clare, which layeth him out as it were in
an Anatomie) yea and great reformation,
both in inward and outward sinnes. Here
therefore beholde what is Repentance.
Likewise Saint Peter through infirmi-
tie hauing denyed his Worde and Maister
Christ, and beeing pinched of his owne
conscience, and wakened with the alarme
of a poyre Cocks crowing, went out of the
Court of Pilate with an heauie heart, wee-
ping bitterly, and euer after stoutly pro-
fessing Christ euen vnto the death. See
then what is repentance. The Prophetes

of Repentance.

in the olde Testament, exhorting the rebellious Iewes vnto repentance, vse commonly an Hebrew word, which signifieth, turne ye, or returne ye and come backe againe. by the which Metaphor is meant, that like as a man that is strayed farre out of his way, must returne quite backe againe the contrarie way: So those that haue strayed from the wayes of godlinesse to the way of sinne, must come backe againe as fast as euer they went forward, and altogether to change the course of their life: so that repentance is an earnest turning vnto God with all our heart, soule, and minde. Saint John Baptist, and the Apostles in the newe Testament exhorting vnto Repentance, vse a Greeke worde which signifieth a changing of the minde after warde, or after witte, so that those which through their follie, and want of former witte, haue slipped into the deepe pitte and dangerous gulle of sinne, when they come vnto themselves, and haue recovered their wits, will bee wise afterwarde, and take heede they neuer come there againe, according to the Proverbe, the burnt child will take heede of the fire. By this time I hope you see what is Repentance. It is not euery sorrow,

but

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but sorrow for sinne: not for some sinne, but
for all sinne: not for an houre, but for ever:
not for a day, but continually: not for a
week, but as long as we live. Some think
every sorrow is repentance, but so should
worldlings repent. Some thinke every
little paine for sinne is repentance, so should
Pharaoh repent. Some thinke all weeping
and lamenting for sinne is repentance: so
should Esau Iudas and Cain repent. Some
thinke every little humbling of our selves
is repentance, but so should Achab repent.
Some thinke that good wordes and good
purposes is repentance: but so should eve-
ry sicke man repent. Some thinke that re-
formation of wordes and deedes is repen-
tance: but so should evil men repent. Some
thinke that cry God mercy is repentance,
and so should every soule repent: You see
therefore how many are deceived in repen-
tance. But if you will see what it is indeed,
looke backe to that which hath bene said a-
fore. For hee that will repent in good ear-
nest, must not hang downe his head like a
Bulrush for a day onely, and so hang downe,
nor cry from the teeth forward, Lord have
mercie on mee, and so away: but hee must
make a backe reckoning with diligent con-
side-

of Repentance.

Iteration of his former life, as did the Prophet David, Psalme 119. verse 59. I have considered my waies, and turned my feet vnto thy testimonies. So must every one that meaneth to repent, sinke aside into some corner or out place, that there he may haue roome enough to beate his owne conscience, and to make his heart smart for his finnes, by aggrauation thereof, and weighing all the circumstances, as in the 9. of Daniell. The Church of God confelleth her sinne, not lightly, but with wonderful great exaggeration, and heaping of one thing to another. So that it is not enough to say, I haue sinned, but to say, I haue moste traitterously sinned, I haue moste obstinately, careleslie, and rebelliously sinned: I haue monsterously offended in such a place, in such a house, in such company, in such a day. In such a corner, in the darke I committed adultery closely, when I thought none had seene mee: in such a chamber I defiled my neighbours wife: mine owne conscience doth accuse me of it: in such and such companie I haue bene drunke, I haue spoken and rayled against Gods worde, I haue mocked the preachers, I haue spared no other nor filthy speech.

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speech, and sicke O Lord, Lord what an
ugly monster, and wretched villaine am I:
Here I stande before thy presence all na-
ked, blinde, wounded, poore, wretched and
miserable; hauing deserved a thousande
damnations, if thou wouldest enter into
iudgement, and try the law with me. Ther-
fore I beseech thee shewe pittye and com-
passion vpon mee. Anoint my woundes
with the oyle of mercie; restore mee my
sight; cloath my nakednesse; enrich me that
am poore; strengthen mee that am weake;
helpe mee that am fallen: oh bid me not
farewell. The infant ouercommeth his
mother with crying; the childe his father
with weeping; and the seruant his maister
by intreatie; and wilt thou not bee entrea-
ted O Lordes? Thus I say, if euery man
would speake in his conscience to God, and
thus narrowly or more narrowly examine
himselfe, vndoubtedly he were in the way
to repentance.

But alas it is a world to see how the blind
Buzardes, and crooked Canker-wozmes
of this world goe awrye from this rule, be-
ceiuing themselves with the bare title and
naked name of repentance. Many indeede
can talke of it, but fewe walke in it: many
speake

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speake of it; but few feele it. Many describe it: but few know it. It is hid and locked vp from the worlde, and reuealed onely to Gods children. Many thinke they haue caught it, when they haue but the shadow of it. It is so hie that few can reach it. It is so deep that few can come to the bottome of it. It is so narrow, that few can enter into it. So wide, that few can comprehend it. So slippery, that few can hold it. So secret, that few can finde it. Therefore my deare brethren, I beseech you, let vs pray vnto our God, that hee would reueale vnto vs this mystery which is hid from the world, that we may truly see it, and know it, find it, and feele it to our endlesse comfort, through Christ Iesus, which grace hee graunt vs.

But now to the second point concerning the qualities and fruites of Repentance. One speciall qualitie of repentance, is alwayes to bring with it remission of sinnes: for where true Repentance goeth before, there remission of sinnes must necessarily follow after, not that repentance deserueth remission of sinne, but because where God worketh Repentance, there hee pardoneth sinne because of his promise. As in Ezec. 18. 27. When the wicked turneth away from

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his wickednes that he hath committed,
& doth that which is lawfull and right, he
shal saue his soule aliue. And againe, Esay
55. 7. Let the wicked forsake his waies, and
the vnrighteous his own imaginations, &
returne vnto the Lord, and hee will haue
mercy vpon him. So here we see, to whom
forgiuenes of sinnes, and the mercy of God
belongeth: namely, to the penitent sinners,
to those that leaue sin, and embrace godli-
nes, to those that forsake their owne wayes
and imaginations, and turn vnto the Lord.
And as for such as walke on, in their owne
wayes, and follow the delights of sin, with-
out any sorrow or purpose to leaue them,
they hauing nothing to do with the mercie
of God, and though Iesus Christ had suffred
an hundred deaths (which could not be) yet
shal no vnpenitent sinner haue remission of
his sins by his death, nor any other benefits
of his passion: for they belong onely to his
Church and chosen people heere vpon the
earth. He therefore that is not of the church,
he that is not grafted into Christ by faith, he
that is not a member of his mysticall body,
can enioy nothing by Christs death. If any
man abide not in me, he is cast foorth as a
branch, & withereth, and men gather the
and

of Repentance.

and cast them into the fire, & they burne:
Iohn 15. 6. Wee read in the 29. of Deute-
ronomie, howe God barreth all stubborne
sinners from his mercy, and doth most ter-
ribly shote out against them. He that hea-
reth the wordes of this curse, and blesseth
himselfe in heart, saying: I shall haue peace
although I walke according to the stub-
borneesse of myne owne heart, thus adding
drunkennesse to thirst, the Lord will not be
merciful vnto him, but the wrath of the
Lord, and his ielousie shal smok against the
man, and euery curse that is written in the
book shal light vpon him. So that God saith
plainly, he hath no mercy for such as walke
in the vain delights of sin, & in the stubborn-
nes of their owne heart: adding drunkennes
to thirst: that is, ioyning one horrible sin to
another, yet for all this it is a wonder to see
how the blind wormes of the earth deceiue
themselves. For they thinke whatsoeuer
they say, whatsoeuer they do, be it good, be it
evil, whether they repent or not repent, yet
they shalbe saued by Christs deeth, as though
they would make it a balme to their sins,
and so worke that villanie against Christ. I
hope to be saued by Christs death, as well
as the best of them al, saith some. But wher

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is thy repentance thou miserable wretch :
Dost thou thinke that Gods mercy is com-
mon to all: And Christs death a baide for
our sins: no, no, when it cometh to the vp
shot, thou shalt stop short. For it will proue
farre otherwise: for thou shalt finde Gods
mercy turned into iustice: and Christs death
into woyme woode, because thou hatedst
knowledge, and choosedst not the fear of the
Lord. Thus you see my deare brethren, that
repentance must needs goe before forgive-
nes of sinnes: and where it leadeth not the
way, ther the gates of Gods mercy are shut
vp, and this is the first qualitie of Repen-
tance. It hath also another condition, and
that is to alter and change men from that
they were before, not in substance and pro-
portion of the body, but in the qualities
and conditions of the mind. For whosoever
hath truely repented, you shal by and by see
a most merueilous and wonderfull change
in him, so that hee will not doe as hee hath
done, nor speak as he hath spoken, nor com-
panie as he hath companied, nor play the
good fellowe (as they terme it) as hee was
wont to doe: nor run to the same excessse of
riot hee was wont. And this is it that ama-
zeth the world, and causeth them to bizzle &
some

of Repentance.

Some at the mouth like wild boares, and to
speake euill of them that turned vnto God:
for the world loueth his owne, and cannot
abide that God should plucke one feather
from his wings. But repentance doth vio-
lently pul men out of the clauess of Satan,
and change them from the conditions of the
world: so; it maketh of proud, humble: of
hurtfull, harmelesse: of cruell, meeke: of
Wolues, Lambes: of Lions, Sheepe: of a-
dulterers, chaste liuers: of drunkards, sober
men: of swearers, reuerent speakers: of ha-
ters, louers: of despisers, embracers: of scof-
fers, followers: of earthly, heavenly: of de-
uils, Saintes. All this worketh Repen-
tance. Paul trauelled towards Damascus,
a wolfe, a persecutor, a bloud-sucker, an ha-
ter, a despiser: but ere he came there, he was
quite changed, and cleane of another mind:
so mighty was he that met him by the way
When Iesus Christ sent downe the holy
Ghost vpon his disciples, according to his
promise, there were some scoffers at Ieru-
salem, which mocked and said, they are full
of new wine. But the same men cryed out
by and by after, Men and brethren, what
shall we doe to be saved?

Here was a most wonderful, and sudden

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change. See then the force of Repentance when God striketh it into the hart of man, & driueth the nayle to the head as they say, it effecteth that which al the wisdom and policie of man is not able to bring to passe, and when they haue proolled hither and thither, and layd their heads together, and sought all the corners of their wits, yet can they not tel which way to turn their hand, or where to begin to change the heart of a man, and to conuert him to God. Therefore repentance is stronger then all the whole world, & worketh that which all men with their naturall wits, fine heades, and deepe deuises cannot compass: for the conuersion of a sinner is a worke supernaturall. Here then we haue a glasse, to behold our selues in, whether euer we haue repented, or no. For if we finde not this chaunge and alteration in vs, we haue not repented, and so consequently remaine vnder damnation. Therefore let euery man looke vnto himself, for marke how much he is changed and altered from his former euill wayes, so much hath he repented. And hee that is the same man, he was three, foure, eight, nay thirtie yeres ago surely, surely, he hath not repented, and therefore abideth in damnation.

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of Repentance.

maruell then how those men which neuer felt any change or alteration wrought in them, nay, whose consciences tel them, that they are not chaged, ne know what it meaneth, can haue any hope of saluation, vnlesse peraduenture they beleue not his doctrine, or thinke it to be false: I wil send ouer these men to such as haue bene in the like case they now are, and yet thought they might do well enough for all that, although both blind in iudgement, and corrupt in conuersation. I haue knowne and do knowe men which befoze their conuersion an inwarde chang were counted as honest men as euer brak bread, and as substantiall men as they could be, as true dealers, vpright liuers, and good hous-keepers as any of their neighbors: yea, and they had the same opinion of themselves too. And yet notwithstanding when they haue felt Repentance working this change and alteration in them, through the power of the spirite at the preaching of the word, and when they haue had new harts, giuen them to discern better, and new eyes to see better, as men come out of a dampe, haue wondred and maruelled at the palpable and grosse darknes they were in befoze, and haue burst forth into these words, that

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they would not bee in the same case they were afore, no not for all the worlds goods, for if they should haue died in that case, they were sure they should haue bene damned. But I pray you what case were they in before, were they not good honest men and well accounted of, and honest liuers, & well taken wheresoeuer they came: Surely they were so taken in the world, but now they thinke far otherwise of themselves, their eyes being opened, and their iudgments enlightened, for now they see that they saw not before, now they vnderstand that God condemneth many whom the world iustificeth. He thinketh this example should make it will and worldly men see and suspect themselves, and know their own misery before God. For these men were as good as they before the conuersion, and yet afterwarde, confessed that they wer plunged to the bottom of hell, & drowned in the depth of damnation. He that hath eares to heare let him heare, & he that hath eyes to see, let him see: for if men will still sooth themselves for all this, that they shal be saved without feeling any change or worke of repentance, it will cost them full deare in the end. For Christs words will proue true, that whosoever re-
penteth

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peniteth not, shall be damned: that is, whoso-
euer doth not feele in himselfe what is Re-
pentance, and find in himselfe the qualities
thereof, shall be condemned. For where Re-
pentance is, there bee the qualities of Re-
pentance, and where the qualities bee ab-
sent, there is no true repentance. So that
where Christ sayth: Except ye repent, ye
shall all perish: it is all one as if he had sayd,
except ye know the truth of repentance, ex-
cept ye can proue vnto your consciences the
forgiuenes of your sinnes, except you feele
a chang & alteration in the bottome of your
heart, of all your former lewd waies & mil-
demeanors, you shall surely perish & be dam-
ned. But let vs yet a little further search
out the qualities of repentance: The Apostle
in the seventh chapter of the second Epistle
to the Corinthians, setteth down seven no-
table qualities and effectes of Repentance.
The first of them he nameth care. For be-
hold (sayth he) this thing that you haue bin
godly sorie, what care it hath wrought in
you, that is an earnest studie, & as it were a
taking thought to please God. For where
true Repentance hath once wrought, there
followeth great care after ward: care I say
to liue in the obedience of God: Care to
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Keep a good conscience. Care to reforme our households : care to instruct our wiues, children & seruants in the knowledge of God : care to pray with them morning and evening. And generally, care to performe all duties belonging to God : So that repentance is not a carelesse, but a careful thing. Let not men thinke therfore that although they welter in carelesnesse of the fleshe, and sleep in security al the daies of their life, yet their Repentance is good enough, yea, and though they spend whole daies, nights, moneths, and yeers in vanities, playes, and pastimes, in idlenesse, fond delights, pleasure and voluptuousnesse, in negligence of all dutie, forgetfulnesse of God, and contempt of all good things: yet so: all this they repent so: their sins, and hope to be saued as well as any other. But alas how can these thinges stand together, to repent so: sinne, and to delight in sin : to hate sinne, to loue sinne: to flie from sinne, and to follow after sin : but these men I perceiue would faine make S. Paul a liar, so: he saith a man hath neuer repented except he be carefull afterward to please God: they say they do repent and haue repented, although they liue neuer so wretchedly, and carelessly. But when all
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of Repentance.

licentious and lewde liuers, filthy whoresmongers, beastly belly gods, & carelesse carsters, come to the kingdome of God, and are saued: then shall these men also come with them to be saued by carelesse repentance.

The hert qualitie and effect of Repentance, is named clearing of our selues, that is, discharging of our selues, when sin doth accuse vs, and lay things to our charge: for when sin and Sathan doth terrifie the conscience of the poore penitent sinner, by and by he flieth vnto God, and asketh forgiveness through Iesus Christ, and so cleareth himselfe, and maketh his apologie against sin and Sathan, like as a man that is presented into the Court, vpon suspicion of whoredome, or any other notorious crime, must cleare himselfe by witnes of y^e which is laid to his charge. So the conscience that is cited by Sathan before the iustice and iudgement seate of God, cleareth it selfe by Repentance, and asketh forgiveness thorough Iesus Christ. So that here wee may see a wonderfull fruit of a penitent conscience, it cannot abide the accusation of sin. It cannot be quiet til it be reconciled vnto God: and so haue peace with it selfe. For this is to be noted in the godly man, that
when

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When he hath committed any sinne, and his conscience telleth him of it, by and by he feelth lead within him, and is all heauie, and cannot sleep quietly, till he haue gotten into some corner where he may mourne and lament to the full, and confesse and lay open himself vnto God, and so cleere himself thorough Iesus Christ, his conscience bearing him witness that his sin is forgiven. Other as contrariwise the vngodly man, when his conscience accuseth him of sinne, he dispatcheth away all such thoughts, and treadeth them vnder foote, and by and by calleth for a payre of cardes or tables, and some merry companion to drine away the time, and to put out all such thoughtes out of his head, and so indeede he increaseth them more and more, & causeth them to ranckle inwardly.

The third qualitie is called indignation. that is, a mortall and deadly hatred against sin: as when a man doth shudder and shake, & as it were grinde his teeth at the remembrance of his sins: so this is alwayes in the penitent person to loath and abhorre all sin from his heart, both his owne finnes and the finnes of other, and to hate it as the diuell himselfe, which is the autho: of it, and to flie from it, as from the very cut-throate
and

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and hangman of his soule, and toknow it to be the only thing that blindeth, that hardeneth, that separateth from God, and procureth all plagues and diseases both of bodie and soule against vs. Therefore he spitteth at it in defiance, and disdayneth it, and stoppeth his nose at the stink of it, wheresoener he smelleth it.

The fourth thing is feare, which is a certaine awe of God, when a man is afrayd to displease him. For the penitent person feareth alway, and being pryncie to his own infirmitie and weaknes (when God neuer so little withdraweth his grace, and leaueth him alone) worketh his saluation with feare and trembling. He will not presume vpon former grace to commit any sinne, or flatter himselfe in the mercie of God, and in the things that he hath already tasted of God, to yelde to some little sinne, thinking hee may doe that, and be the child of God well enough, because some of Gods chyldren haue fallen into greater: but rather he trembleth at the least motion of sinne, and is afrayd of the temptations which Satan trumpeteth in his way, and is afrayd when the temptations of sinne are vpon him, to satiffie the hunger of sinne, but rather hee fighteth against

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against sin, when sin fighteth against him, and presenteth the feare of God before his eyes (as godly Joseph in the assault of Potiphar's wife) to bee as it were a tower of defence and wellspring of life, to auoyd the snares of death.

The fift thing is desire, that is, a hangering and thirsting after righteousness. For the penitent man is rauished with desire of good things: he desireth to bee euery day better than other: he desireth to leaue euery day some sin: he desireth to pray: he desireth new knowledge, and new vnderstanding of heauenly things. He desireth to heare Sermons, and will strayne himselfe to heare them. He desireth the company of the godly, hee thinketh himselfe in heauen, when he is amongst them. He desireth the saluation of his very enemies, and prayeth for them. Al these and many other such like desires are in the penitent man.

The sixt qualitie is zeale, which consisteth in the earnest embracing of vertue, and hatred of vice, so that the penitent person is zealous of euery good thing. Zealous of Gods glory in all places, in all companies, and amongst all persons. He cannot abide that Gods honor should bee impeached, or
his

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his name blasphemed, or his glorie trampled vnder foote by wicked men, but he will open his mouth to reprove the wicked, and stand stoutly in the defence of Gods glorie. He is not like the Atheists and dissemblers, which are alwayes as is the companie, that is, godly amongst the godly : a Protestant amongst Protestants, wicked amongst the wicked : a Papist amongst Papistes : a Worlolling amongst Worlollidgs : and a Swearer amongst Swearers : a weather-cocke that turneth with every winde. The penitent man I say, is not of this stampe, but hee is constant and zealous in all good things : he is zealous both against the pleasures and profits of sinne, though he might win a whole world, or pleasure himself neuer so much, by committing a sinne against God, yet will he refuse it : for he hath learned from Christs mouth, that it shall not profite a man to win the whole world, and to lose his owne soule.

The last thing is Reuenge, that is, the penitent person is so offended with the sin he hath committed, that he wil be reuenged of himselfe for it. As for example, if he haue offended in gluttonie, he will reuenge himselfe by fasting two or thre dayes after : If he

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hee haue offended in whoredome, he will be reuenged of his lusts, by haltering and bzi-
ling of them euer after: if he haue offended
in couetous catching and polling of other
mens goods, he wil be reuenged on himselfe
by restitution, as was godly and penitent
Zacheus, and this indeede is a speciall fruit
of Repentance, to reforme our selues in
those things, wherem we haue most offen-
ded. Now, then you see (my deare brethzen)
what lyeth in the belly of Repentance, and
which bee her in wardes, so that wee must
needes now come to the unlacing and un-
bowelling of Christs words: Except ye re-
pent (sayth he) ye shall all perish: that is,
except yee haue this forenamed care, you
shall all be damned: except you haue this
cleering of your selues, you shall be damned:
Except you haue this indignation, you shall
all be damned: Except you haue this feare,
you shall be damned: Except you haue this
desire, you shall all be damned: Except you
haue this zeale, you shall al be damned: Ex-
cept you haue this reuenge, you shall all be
damned. For our Saviour Christ doth not
speake of the bare name of Repentance:
but of Repentance with all her furniture
and appurtenances, so that whosoever hath
not

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not Repentance with all her qualities and effects; or at the least some measure of them, hee hath no repentance indeede, and therefore shall be damned: for except ye repent, ye shall all perish. But me thinketh that I heare some men say: Here is nothing but damnation, damnation. You preach nothing but the Lawe: Let vs heare of the Gospel. My brethren, I protest vnto you, that I speake of loue, whatsoeuer I speake. I desire the saluation of you all: If I could win but two in all this congregation, I would count my selfe happie, and thinke that God had greatly blessed my labours. And undoubtedly, if I knewe any neerer way to bring you vnto GOD, than by preaching the Lawe, to make you knowe your selues, surely, truly, I would vse it. O: if I could be perswaded that the preaching of the Gospel, and mercy would doe you more good: you should heare of nothing but Gospel, Gospel, Mercy, Mercy: But alas, I see that every carelesse and ignorant man presumeth vpon Gods mercie: I see that every filthie liuer, and notorious blasphemour, abuseth Gods mercie, in applying it to himselfe without repentance, so that they would make Gods mercie a cloake for
their

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their finnes : I see that euery man would
fain bee flattered in sinne, and heare of it
no more, but haue the Gospell preached,
which indeede belongeth not vnto them,
continuing in their stubbornesse, but one-
ly to the penitent sinner, which forsaketh
himself, and groneth and panteth vnder the
burden of his sinne. Therefore when I see
you humbled with the conscience of your
finnes, and grone and pant vnder the bur-
den of them : when I see your faces blabbe-
red with weeping, and your hearts mollified
and sorrowing with care, then will I com-
fort you, and cease to preach the lawe. But
I pray you, will you steale, murther, and
commit adulterie, and yet heare of mercie?
Will ye mock sweare, blaspheme, and raile,
and yet heare of mercie? Will you serue
sinne, hate vertue, and follow your owne
lusts, and yet heare of mercie? Would you
haue Bleisters before you haue woundes?
Would you haue Physicke before you bee
sicke? Would you bee let blood before you
haue neede? Would you not account him a
foolish Physicion that will minister physicke
to a whole man? Would you not think him
an unskillfull Chirurgeon, that will apply
a gentle salve to an olde festered sore, and
not

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not rather cozze it : When knowe you my
bretthren, that because you are full of grosse
humors, you must haue strong purgations,
because you are full of old festered wounds,
you must haue corasive salues, for that is
the best for you, and the speediest way to re-
couer your health: and forasmuch as you be
rough Horses, you must haue a rough bit-
ter : and hard knobbie Timber must haue
hard Wedges, and hard strokes with a be-
tle. We preach the Lawe to drive you to
Christ : we preach iudgement to make you
seeke mercy: we preach damnation to bring
you to saluation. But to preach mercie and
forgiuenesse before men see their sinnes, or
knowe their miseries by the preaching of
the Lawe, is to preach the Gospel vnprofi-
tably. For he that is ignorant of the Lawe,
knoweth not what miserie is in himselfe :
nor what mercy is in God.

What father is there, who if his child
should play the stubborne boy, and disobey
him in every thing he commaunded, would
stroke his head, and say he were a good boy,
and not rather seuerely correct him, and
whip him with a rod : What master will
commend his seruant for doing what he list,
and not what he commaundeth him: euen so

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we may not disobey, and doe euill, and looke to be flattered too, and not rather chidden. Let vs know then, that although God vse scolding, launcing, cozing, and searching of the bones, and other violent remedies, yet in the meane while he procureth our health by them. And let vs further vnderstande, that so far as much as there is none other means to draw vs to saluation, but by cleansing of all our vices, and the same cleansing cannot be done but by violence, when wee be warned by the doctrine of the Lawe, so as our owne conscience accuse vs, although we like well to bee now and then flattered and soothed, yet let vs seeke to be spoken vnto earnestly, to haue our faults told vs, and to be made ashamed of them, & to haue our vnholinesse discovered, and not desire to be pleased. For it was the next way to make vs rot in our owne filthinesse, if we should hold it in so secret: & it would cost vs so deere the setting on, if we should bee so flattered by men, and in the meane season the heauily iudge shall thunder downe vpon vs.

Therefore when any man cometh to a Sermon, let him first and foremost make his reckoning to be rebuked, as meete is, and let him vnderstand, that it is for his profite, that

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that he is not soothed. And if he haue itching eares, let him lay them away from him, assuring himself that els he is foreclosed, so as he shal neuer receiue the doctrine to his profit and instruction. And let him be content to haue his sores rubbed and be lanced, that he may be brought to that, which is for his welfare. If a man please a sicke body, what shal become of him, shal he giue him drinke euery minute of an houre? Shall hee giue him wine, whereas he should giue him water? Shall he giue him Salletes? It were the next way to popson him. To be short, it is certaine that a man doth alwayes seeke his owne death, when he would haue men to sooth him. But now which is better, either that he which hath the ordering of a sicke man, should yeeld to all his desires, or that he should bridle him, notwithstanding that he chafe and gnash his teeth, because he may not haue his owne will in his desires? You see therefore howe dangerous a thing it is to flatter & raise vp men with the preaching of mercy, before they haue beene cast downe with the sense of gods iudgements. Cease therefore to open your moathes to make hue and cry ouer the Countrey, saying: They preache nothing but the lawe, the

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Law, Damnation, Damnation, vntlesse ye wil take in Christ too, and make him one of the number, and accuse him of want of wisdom, because he preacheth and cryeth out that whosoener repenteth not shall be condemned. For my part, I preach the Gospel to whom the gospel belongeth, and the law to whom the law belongeth, I preach mercy to whom mercy belongeth, & iudgement to who iudgement appertaineth. And therefore hold your peace and be content to be ruled by the wisdom of God. But now let vs proceed to the third general point, which is the time when we should repent.

The holy Ghost in the Scriptures pointeth vs to the present time, and exhorteth vs to make that the time of our repentance. Joel 2. 21. Therefore also now the Lorde saith, turne you vnto me with al your hart, with fasting, with weeping and with mourning. Likewise in the 3. Chapter to the Hebrewes: Exhort one another while it is called to day, least any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sinne. And in the same Chapter: To day if ye will heare his voice, harden not your hartes as in the promocation: So that now, even now, even now, is the time of our repentance.

Now

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Now whilst he calleth, now whilst he
speaketh, now whilst he knocketh, let vs
now therefore heare: let vs now therefore
obey: let vs now therefore redeeme this day,
this present Wednesday; which haue fore-
flooded so many dayes; which haue so long
hardened our hearts, which haue let so many
good things run out, and spill besides: let vs
take vp this day, and make it the day of our
repentance. Although we could neuer bee
moued with any Sermon hitherto, yet let
vs now be moued once at last: Let vs now
say, This shall be my day of repentance, I
will deferre it no longer: but nowe will I
turne vnto my God, and forsake all my for-
mer wicked wayes, and mine owne imagi-
nations: I will nowe change the course of
my life, and beginne all new againe. I will
be acquainted with Gods worde, and take
counsel there how to do, and how to behaue
my selfe in euery action. I will not only re-
forme my self, but also my whole household,
wife, children, and seruants, according vnto
the same. Thus my deare brethren, I be-
seech you, purpose in your hearts without
any further delay, and bee not like to Epi-
cures and slacke graces, which say, Youth
will be youthfull, and youth will haue a
course,

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course, and what should we make it so holy
when we are young: tush, there needes but
a sigh an houre before death, let vs be merry
now, we shal neuer be younger, we will re-
pent when wee are olde. As though poore
soules, they had repentance in their sleepes,
and at their commandement, and that they
could repent whē they list. No, no, these fel-
lowes shall pay for their presumption. For
GOD will giue them euē to hardnesse of
heart, and impenitencie, because they tooke
so much vpon them, and made so long de-
laies that in the meane season they might
enjoy the profits and pleasures of sin. Ther-
fore good brethren let vs not put it off from
day to day, but let vs nowe seeke the Lord
whilest he may be found, and call vpon him
whilest he is neere: let vs take time while
time is, for time and tide farieth for no man.
Let vs knowe this to be the time of our vi-
sitation. Our Saviour Christ wept ouer
Ierusalem, because they knew not the time
of their visitation. He reproveth the Jewes
because they could discerne the face of the
skie, but could not discerne the signes of the
times. And surely in the ende it will turne
to our destruction, if he will not. knowe this
to be the day of mercy, the time of grace,
wherein

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wherein God stretcheth forth his hand vnto vs, and wisdom crieth out in the streets. Wherefore now whilest we haue the light, let vs walke as children of the light: the night commeth when no man can work. It shall bee too late to call for mercy after this life, when the gates of mercy are shut vp, and Repentance will bee too late. Oh deere Christians let vs remember the five foolish Virgins, which because they foreslowed the time, had heauen gates barred vp against them. Let vs also remember the fearful and dolefull example of the rich glutton, which being in hell tormentes, yelled and yelped for the least ease and helpe that might be, & could not haue it. An hundred thousand times therfore, better it is for vs to leaue our sins now, to mourne for them now, and now to repent, than hereafter, alas, when it will be too late. Better now a great deale to take some paines, to straine our selues to leaue our sinnes, and to make our hart smart for them, than to be condemned for euer, and to cry in the bottome of hel: We haue wearied our selues in the way of wickednes and destruction, and we haue gone through dangerous wayes: but we haue not knowne the way of the Lord. What hath ye profited

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sited vs: What profit hath the pompe of riches brought vs: All those things are passed away like a shadow, and as a host that passeth by. We haue set our selues against the children of God, we haue had them in derision, and in a parable of reproach, we foles thought their life madnesse, and their end with dishonor, but loe they are counted amongst the children of God, & their portion is among the Saints. Therefore let vs know the time of our calling, and let vs not be worse then the foules of the ayre: The Turtle, the Crane, & the Swallow, obserue the times of their comming, the husbandman taketh his times, the Hariner watcheth his tides: therefore let vs also take the time and turne vnto the Lord, whilest it is sayd to day, which grace God grant vs.

Nowe let vs returne vnto the fourth poynt concerning the causes, which may moue vs vnto repentance. Herein I haue obserued nine especiall thinges. First, the great mercy of God, leadeth vs vnto repentance. as Rom. 2. The bountifullnesse of God, leadeth vs vnto repentance, saith the Apostle. God hath continually followed vs, with his mercies and benefits, both concerning our soules and bodies, we haue no
god

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god thing, which we haue not receiued at his hands, we hold all that we haue of him, and to him are we beholding for all: great is his mercy towarde our bodies, but much greater towarde our soules: and euery mercy and benefite, either towarde soule or body, calleth vs to repentance. He giueth vs meate, drinke, and clothing, these call vs to repentance: hee keepeth vs at his owne costs and charges heere below, this calleth vs to repentance: the Sunne, the Moone, and the Starres call vs to repentance. The Birdes of the ayre, the Fishes of the Sea, and the fruits of the earth cry out vpon vs both loude and shrill: Repent, repent. All creatures moue vs to repentance. Our creation calleth, our redemption crieth, our sanctification knocketh, and our election moueth to repentance. What could God do more for his Vineyard that he hath not done: Wherefore let vs repent.

Secondly, the iudgementes of GOD moue vs vnto repentance, for all the thunderboltes, Plagues, and Punishmentes, which God hath throwne downe vpon obstinate sinners, from the beginning of the world, are so many warning peeces vnto vs to awake vs out of the dead sleep of sin, and

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to picke vs to Repentance. As in the first Cor. 10. when the Apostle had cited diuers great iudgements of **G D D**, against the old Israelites for diuers sinnes, he concludeth: Now all these things came vnto them for examples, & were written to admonish vs, vpon whom the endes of the world are come. So that all the iudgements we read of in the Scriptures, are so many admonitions, and as it were Cartropes to drawe vs to Repentance. All the iudgements we read of, heard of, doe see, and heare of euery day, knocke with main strokes, beate downe right vpon our consciences to Repentance. The ugly monsters, strange births, fire constellations, vnknoone Comets, sudden death, maruailous droughes, vnwonted snowes, horrible inundations, foraine wonders, strange apparitions, threating of heauē about, with streaming and shooting fire, trembling of the earth vnder our feet, and our houses ouer our heads, as of late day: What are all these, but as it were great Cranes with beames, and Cable Ropes, to draw vs vp to the heauē by repentance.

Thirdly, the word of God halet vs to Repentance. For, as God in old time sent his

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his prophets, both early and late, to call the rebellious Jewes to repentance: so he sendeth abroad his preachers, and messengers in these dayes, to sound vp the trumpet of his word, and to ring the sweet bel of Aaron amongst them, to awake them to repentance, but alas, howe lightly are they regarded? Who heareth their voyce? But surely this is the last remedie that **G D** hath appointed, and if this will not moue vs to repentance, if this will not cure vs, then are we altogether vncurable.

Fourthly, the infinite number of sinnes wee haue committed ought to be so many spurres in our sides, to pricke vs to repentance. It is sufficient, saith Saint Peter, that we haue spent the time past of our life after the lustes of the Gentiles, walking in Wantonnes, Luts, Drunkenesse, Gluttonie, Drinkings, and al abhominable Idolatries: Therefore, it is time now to repent. Oh that men would looke backe to themselves, as they were fortie, thurtie, twentie, or ten yeares agoe. Oh that they would call to minde, their open and secret sins, and me thinketh it should make their hart bleed within their belly, to think vpon them. Oh that they would consider howe
much

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much time they haue mis-spent, and how many good things they haue neglected, and altogether omitted.

Fiftly the shortnesse of our life, calleth earnestly vpon vs to Repent. The time of our life is sixtie yeares and ten, and if they be of strength eighty yeers, yet the strength is but labour and sorrowe, so is it cutte off quickly, and we fles alway sayth the Prophet Dauid, we haue spent our yeares as a thought. Therefore he addeth: Teach vs to number our dayes that wee may apply our harts vnto wisdome. Our life for the shortnes, and inconstancy of it in the Scriptures is compared to grasse, to a vapour, to smoke, to a Weauers shuttle which glideth alway swiftly. Euen so the dayes of man passe away, no man knoweth how. Man is of short continuance, saith Iob, and full of trouble. Experience teacheth, that to day a man, to morrow none. Hence alway we must all; heere is no abiding place for vs, howe soon we know not. Therefore let vs repent.

Sixtly, the small number of those which shalbe saued, ought to thrust vs forward to repentance. Strive to enter in at the narrow gate: For many I say vnto you will seeke to enter in, and shall not be able, saith Christ,

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Christ, Luke 13. 24. And in another place he saith, The gate is straight, and the way narrow that leadeth vnto life, and few there be that find it. If men would consider of this, it woulde make them looke better about them, and trie with themselves whether they be of that small number or no.

Seuenthly, death threatneth vs, who is verie terrible to the flesh, and the remembrance of it very bitter to a man that is soured and soaked in the pleasures of this world. It flattereth no man; it regardeth no persons, it weigheth not friendship, it careth not for rewardes, it is very grim, ugly, and cruel, and killeth down right where it hitte. Therefore let vs repent.

Eightly, the day of iudgement and seconde appearing of the Sonne of man, will come as a theefe in the night, in the which the heauens shall passe away with a noyse, and the Elements shall melt with heate, and the earth with the workes that are therein, shall be burnt vp: seeing therefore that all these things must be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to bee in holy conuersation and godlinesse, sayth S. Peter 2. 3. The Lord Jesus shall shew himselfe from heauen, with his mighty Angels

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in flaming fire, rendering vengeance vnto them that know not God, and obey not vnto the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ. saith the Apostle, 2 Thess. 1. I sawe, saith S. Iohn, Apoc. 20. a great white Throne, & one that sat on it, from whose face fled away, both the earth and the heauen, and their place was no more found. And I saw the dead, both great and smal stand before God: and the books were opened, and another booke was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were iudged of those thinges, which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gaue vp her dead, which were in her, & death & hel deliuered vp the dead which were in them: and they were iudged every man, according to his workes. In these places we see, both the sodainnes, the fearefulness, & glory of Christs comming. For he shal not come poorly, & contemptuously, as in the first visitation, but he shal come very princely, royally, and triumphantly to the great terror of all his enemies, when a consuming fire shal goe before him, & ten thousand thousands of Angels wayt vpon him: at what time the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe captains

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captains, and the mightie men, and every
bondman, & every free man, shal hide them-
selues in denues, and amongst the rocks of
the mountaines, and say to the rockes and
mountaines, shal on vs, and hide vs fro the
presence of him that sitteth on the throne,
and from the wrath of the Lambe, for the
great day of his wrath is come, & who can
stand? Apoc. 6 Therefore let vs repent.

The last thing is hell torment than the
which nothing is more intolerable. There-
fore sayth Christ, Mar. 9. If thine hand cause
thee to offend cut it off. It is better for
thee to enter into life maimed, than ha-
ving two hands to goe into hell, into the
fire that neuer shalbe quenched, wher the
worme dyeth not, and the fire neuer go-
eth out. The Scripture speaketh terrible
to our senses, concerning the estate of the
damned persons, calling it hell fire, damna-
tion, the lake that burneth with fire and
brimstone for ever. In the thirty chapter of
the prophesie of Esay, it is called Topheth,
and it is euell prepared of old, it is euell pre-
pared for the king: he hath made it deep and
large, the burning thereof is fire and much
wood, the breath of the Lord like a riuer of
brimstone doth kindle it. These speeches are

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terrible to our senses, and may interminably amaze vs. But if I had the tongue of an hundred men, nay of an hundred Angels, yet were I not able to utter them, as some shall one day feele them, much lesse were you able to conceiue them. If al the tortures and cruell torments that can be deuised by the wit of man, were executed vpon some one, yet were it nothing to this. The poore wretches thinke there is no paine to a collick, or a cruell ague. But if all collicks, agues, & al other straunge diseases could possibly light vpon one man, it were but a flea-biting to that which is to come. The paine is endles, easeles, and remedilesse. The dayes of their hellish torments shall neuer weare out, nor their yeeres come to an end, the longer they continue, the lesse hope haue they. When as many yeeres are expired as there be men in the world, and starres in the heauens: when as many thousand yeeres are ended, as there be stones and sand by the sea shore: yet still there bee tenne hundred thousand times so many mo to come. Those that will not helpe bee moued in hearing, shall then bee chastised to peeres in feeling. All drunkards, sweareers, whozemongers, blurers, extortioners, lyers, mockers, contentners, secure

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secure persons, iolly fellows, roisting ruffians, lustie bloudes the bzaue lads of this world, and all other vnbeléeuers, shall one day be apprehended, and arraigned before the barre of Gods tribunall seate, where the maiestie of God shall stand aboue them, with a naked sword of vengeance, and a scepter of Justice. The diuell that old Sathanas shall stand on the one side to accuse them, and their owne consciences on the other side to condemne them, and the gaping gulfe of Hell vnderneath them ready to swallowe them vp for euermore. Then shall the dreadfull sentence of eternall woe and damnation proceede against them: Goe ye cursed into hell fire, &c. There they shall drinke as a iust recompence of their iniquitie, the bitter cup of Gods eternall wrath and indignation, in the kingdome of darkenes, and in the feareful presence of Sathan, and all the cursed enemies of Gods grace, where the dolefull drumme of Gods anger shall euer sound through their eares, where shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth, where shall be confusion, woe, and endlesse lamentation. Their gripes shall be great, their grones so deepe, and their garboiles so intollerable, that they shall grin like a dog

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in their infernall conuulsions, & with howling and yelling cry out, woe, and alas that euer I was borne: Oh that I had neuer been borne, or that my mother had born me a toade, for then my condition should haue been better then it is. Cursed was the time I was begot in, the houre I was conceived in, and the day that I sucked my mothers paps. Cursed I was alwayes, cursed I am, and cursed I shalbe for ouermore. Woe, woe, how great is my torment, whose hart doth not melt, whose eares doe not glow, whose haire do not stand vpon his head to heare these things: Therfore deere bzyethzen let vs repent. If the mercy of God cannot allure vs, let his iudgements scarre vs. If his iudgements cannot scarre vs, let his word moue vs. If his word cannot moue vs, let our synnes amaze vs. If our synnes cannot amaze vs, let the shortnes of our life dampe vs. If the shortnes of our life cannot dampe vs, let the smal number of those that shalbe saved, afray vs. If that cannot afray vs, let death terrifie vs. If death cannot terrifie vs, let the day of iudgement shake vs. If that cannot shake vs, yet let hell torments shudder vs, and rent vs in peeces. For verily my bzyethzen, if none of all these can preuaile,

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naile, if he will not for al this repent, but be obstinate, then we shall all perish & be damned, according to Christs words. Now let vs proceede to speake of those things which let and hinder vs from Repentance, which indeed although they be in number infinite, yet at this time I wil lay forth seven special lets, and hinderances vnto repentance.

The first is vnbeleefe, that is, when men will not beleue those things which are spoken and proued vnto them out of the word of God. This is it that vomiteth vp all good things, and poysoneth the very intrals of a man, and keepeth all good graces from vs. As appeareth Matthew 13. 58. He did not many great workes there, for their vnbeleefes sake. And in the fourth to the Hebrewes it is sayd, Vnto vs was the Gospel preached as also vnto them, but the word that they hard, profited not them, because it was not mixed with faith, in these that heard it. So that here wee may see, although we heare neuer so much, yet if wee bring not faith with vs, wee shall neuer profit vnto repentance. For vnbeleef taketh vp our harts for Satan, and refuseth all the wholesome doctrine of saluation, and doth so harden them in the wayes of sinne, that

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In the end they become past feeling, and can not bee touched one whit, either with the iudgements or mercies of God: but count the one as blasts of winde, and make the other a couert for their filthinesse. You shall note some men, who when they haue heard their sins straightly ripped vp by the word of God, and their iust damnation proued by the same, without speedy and earnest repentance, will breake out into these wordes of vnbeliefe: If it be as he saith, God help vs, I hope it is not so, I trust I shall doe well enough for all this, as long as I haue a good faith in GOD, and doe no bodie no harme. Shall I leaue my pleasures and my profits for their sayings: What: doe they thinke none shall bee saued, but such as reade the Scriptures, and heare sermons: God forbid but those which do not goe to heare sermons, should be saued as wel as they: Why may not one serue GOD as well at home in his house hauing good booke, and good prayers, as by comming to the Church to heare Sermons and Seruice: Alas, these men stand too much in their owne light, and betray what follye and ignorance is in them. For do they thinke to be saued by any other meanes than God hath appointed: or
when

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When God hath auouched any thing in his word, will they except against it, & so make God a lyer: When God hath once set down a thing, & proued it to their faces, will they yet reply: When God hath tolde vs that the preaching of the word is the ordinarie meanes of our saluation, shall wee hope to be saued, although we contemne it, & neuer or very seldome heare it: Is not this plaine infidelitie and vnbeleefe, that when God saith one thing we will say another: when God sayth yea, wee will say, no, I hope not so. Yes surely that is it that stoppeth the way vnto Gods graces, and barreth vs out from repentance.

The second let is this presumption of Gods mercy, for if men be sharply repproued for their sinnes, and exhorted vnto repentance, by and by they take couert, saying: God is mercifull, God is mercifull: as though God were made all of mercy, and that there were no iustice in him at all: and thus the wicked make Gods mercie an occasion to sin, which thing the Prophet Nahum in the first of his prophesie doth sharply repproue: The Lord (saith he) is slow to anger, but he is great in power, and will not surely cleere the wicked. But because

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I haue spoken afoze of this presuming and misappling of Gods mercie, I will heere passe it ouer, willing you to note it as one special let vnto repentance.

The third hinderance is the example of the multitude, for that both harden and imbolden men vnto sin. As when many birds flicker and flocke together, they fall vpon the net without any feare : but one or two alone will be afrayd. Euen so the examples of many, and many sinne companions doe imbolden men to run through the snares of Sathan without any mistrust. Therefore it is sayd in Exodus 23. Thou shalt not follow a multitude to doe euill. This is the thing that hindereth a great number from God : for they neuer looke vp vnto God or to his word, but stare vpon the common doings of most men, and examples of the world, thinking if they do as the most men doe, as their forefathers haue done before them, they are cocke sure, and of an euen ground. And hereupon ariseth their diuelish prouerbe : Do as most men doe, and the fewest wil speake of you: but they haue forgotten Saint Pauls rule. Romans 12. Fashion not your selues like vnto this world. These fellows that stand vpon multitude,
will

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will reason thus: we see none of the great ones of the world, none of the noble, none of the rich, none of the wise and prudent, receiue this doctrine, but onely a few shack-rags and beggerly rascals, and therefore it is a token that it is nothing worth, and that it is doubtful, and not for vs to meddle withall. Loc what thoughtes may creepe into our heads, and how sily Sathan may trumpe in our way, and blindfolde vs, and leade vs away in the darke, by doting vs with the example of the multitude. Therefore let vs take heede of those pitfallles, which Sathan layeth in our way, and not bee carried away with these thoughtes and reasons. The wicked bare themselves in hand that they shall winne the game, and that the goale goeth on their side, and there is nothing but crowing long before it bee day, and great triumphing amongst them before any stroke be stricken, and that because we be but a handfull of people, & they a great multitude, and that in a maner the whole world agreeth with them to practise our death. Thus the deuill doth cast a mist before their eyes and closely leade them away from Repentance. Therefore deare brethren, let vs stand fast in the worde of the

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the Lord, and not be caried away, or holped quite dolone with this raging streame of the multitude: but let vs know it to be one speciall engine of Sathan, whereby he diueth vs from repentance.

The fourth let vnto repentance, is long custome of sinne. For that taketh away all sence and feeling of sinne, and maketh it as it were another nature vnto vs: so that we may as wel alter nature, as shake it of whē it is once thus soldred vnto vs through lōg custome. Therefore it is said: Ierem. 13. 23. Can the blacke Moore change his skin? or the Leopard her spots? then may ye also doe good that are accustomed to do euil. Here the Prophet affirmeth that it is as hard to cure an olde disease that is bred in the bones, and to remedie a sinne that hath beene hatched and brought vp with vs, as to wash a blacke Moore white, or to change the spottes of a Leopard, which cannot be without destroying of nature. And surely try it who wil, he shal find it as hard a matter to leaue an old custome, whether it be of swearing, of gaming, of lying, of whooring, of euil company, or of any other sinne, as to wash an Ethiopian. Therefore it is written, Prouer. 17, Though thou shouldest bray a foole

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foole in a mortar, among wheate brayed with a pestill: yet will not his foolishnes depart from him. So that as long as wee are in custome with sinne, the doore of Repentance is barred vp against vs.

The first hinderance, is long escaping of punishment, for the wicked thereby are slackened in sin, and driuen off from repentance, euen as an old theefe that hath stolne a long time, and escapeth both pryson and gallowes, is animated more boldly to proceede in his wickednesse, thinking he shall so alwaies escape: So many filthy and loose liuers goe forward in their abominations without Repentance, thinking that because God doth not incontinently punish them, and shewe some manifest iudgement and signe of his wrath vpon them, therefore they shalbe acquitted for altogether. Where as contrariwise, if God should by and by strike them downe as soone as they had sinned, by thundring vpon one, and lightening vpon another, and rayning fire and brimstone vpon the third, it would make them afrayde. Hereupon it is sayd in Pet. 2. 3. 4. This first vnderstand that there shall come in the last daies mockers which will walke after their lusts, and say, where is the promise

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mise of his comming: For since the fathers dyed, all things continue alike from the beginning of the creation. But let these men well know that when God hath delayed a long time, and prolonged the terme of the wicked, at length hee will shewe, that although he wayted for their repentance, yet he forget not their mis-deedes, but registred them before him, and packed them vp upon a great heape, to increase the terrour of his wrath.

The first hinderance, is the beholding of other mens ends. For when some men that haue liued a wicked, and an ungracious life, and haue been notorious sinners euen to the world warde, so that euery man could poynt at them: yet if vpon their death bedde they can say a felwe good wordes and crye God mercy, and say their prayers, and forgiue all the world, and so die quietly, it is marueilous to heare, how foolish people of the world wil exalt them, and iustifie them, saying: He made a very good end as any man could make, he died as quiet as a lamb, and set all things in good order before hee dyed. Hereupon another wicked and monstrous varlet is encouraged to sume. For thinketh he, such a man liued as loosely as I, or any man

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man else, and yet he made a very good ende,
& why may not I doe so too? But alas these
mens eyes are bleered: for to die quietly,
is not to die godly: to cry God mercie for
fashion, is not to haue God mercifull: to say
a few prayers from teeth outward, is not to
die in the faith of Christ: for many doe all
this and yet die miserably.

The last let, is hope of long life, for while
men feed, and besot themselves in this hope
they are drunken in sin, and deferre the day
of repentance. As the rich man in the 12.
of Luke, dreaming of his long life, cast off al
thought of God, and of the other life, and of
Christs comming, and of repentance, and all
good things, and sayd within himself: Soule
thou hast much goods layde vp for many
yeres, litle at ease, eate, drink, and take thy
pastime. Thus the bleare eyed men of the
wo, so choake vp Repentance, & quite smother
it, by docting themselves with hope of
long life. Therefore my deare brethren, I
beseech you by the mercies of God in the
bowels of Jesus Christ, that none of all
these common lets may stay you from speedie
and vnfeigned Repentance: But that
you may ouerslide them all, least unhappie
lie you being found without Repentance,
and

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and taken tardie in your sins, should all per-
rish and bee damned, according to Christs
sentence. Wherefore in conclusion, let vs
with godly Ezekias bee afrayde of Gods
threatnings, sorowe afore hand, stand in
awe of God, examine our conscience, mourn
for our sins, & lament inwardly, that when
the wicked which haue swimmied in plea-
sures here below, shal enter into their eter-
nall paines, we may then, I say there, haue
euerlasting peace and rest, that when Iesus
Christ shall appeare from heauen with all
his holy Angels, we may haue crownes of
glorie, and raigne with our GOD, and our
Saviour his Sonne, and al his Saints and
Angels, in the midst of all ioy, in the hea-
uens for euermore. To the which ioy hee
bring vs all, which hath so deere bought
vs, Iesus Christ the righteous: to whom
with the Father, and the holy Ghost,
be all honor, glory, praise, power,
empire, and dominion now
and for euermore,

Amen.

FINIS.



De: on

Danti's Sermon on Repentance appears
to have been popular - for it was printed
in 1582, 1583, 1590, 1598, and 1600.
The present Edition Herbert does not name.